OPEN ARMS · P.O. BOX 845 · MISHAWAKA · INDIANA · 46546

JULY VOL. 6 NUMBER 7

OPEN ARMS

1994

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Scientists Link Most Genetic Problems to Male

Women may not find this surprising, but one of the most persistent and frustrating problems in evolutionary biology is the male.

Specifically, where did he come from, and why doesn't he just go away?

It would be so much neater and more sensible if females were to do the whole reproductive business solo, either by making simple clonal copies of their eggs -- as do some lizards and fish, for example -- or by manufacturing in-house the sperm needed to fertilize the eggs, as do some worms and snails.

Instead, in most species, a female relies for her genetic survival on sex with a male, a bearer of semen and usually not much else. In doing so, she makes substantial sacrifices. Her offspring end up with only half of her genes, rather than the whole portion borne by the children of asexual mothers. The mating ritual itself is often time-consuming, complicated and risky.

And to top it all off, the male typically makes a swift postcoital exit, leaving the female to rear her offspring alone.

Now a researcher from the University of British Columbia offers results that only deepen the mystery of why males arose on the evolutionary stage and why females continue to tolerate them.

Dr. Rosemay J. Redfield of the department of zoology reports in the current issue of the journal Nature that a female, by mixing her chromosomes with a male's, perpetually tempts genetic disaster.

It turns out that the male's sperm cells are likely to be riddled with far more genetic mutations than are the female's eggs -- anywhere from 2 to 100 times more mutations, depending on the species.

Most genetic alterations are undesirable, possibly resulting in disease or frailty in one's offspring, the female appears to be getting a lousier deal from sexual reproduction than scientists previously had imagined.

The discrepancy in mutation rates among males and females is a simple matter of cell division. Because a male generates so much more sperm than a female does eggs, his sex cells are dividing comparatively faster and more often. It is during cell growth, when chromosomes are being copied for apportionment into two new cells, that the greatest likelihood of genetic missteps arises.

Scientists have long suspected that males may be resonsible for the great majority of new mutations that appear in a population of animals, but they have only just begun to gather supporting evidence from DNA studies.

Dr. Redfield's report results call into question a prominent theory of why sex evolved: to prevent potentially harmful mutations from gradually gethering in a female's genetic stock. By this notion, asexual reproduction is a one-way street to total genetic decay, as mutations arise during the cloning of the female's eggs, and those genetic errors accrete dangerously with succeeding generation.

One reason for sex, then, could be to inject a new round of genes into the mix to help keep the mutational load at a minimum. Enter the accommodating male and his refreshing sperm.

"If sex is the device to reduce the mutational load, and if the male mutation rate is indeed higher, then it doesn't look like a reasonable idea for a female to have anything to do with a male and his contaminated gametes," said Dr. Alexey S. Kondrashov of the department of ecology and systematics at Cornell University.--Info South Bend Tribune--

COMMUNITY EVENTS

All times are Indiana time

VIDEO NIGHT

There will be no video night until September due to the softball season.

LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

First and third Tuesday of the month
7-9 p.m.
For info, write:
LSG
P.O. Box 1281
Niles, MI 49120

Wimin 's Football...every Sunday at 4:00 p.m., at Boehm Park (for additional information, call Doreen, 234-9082)

MARY'S GARDEN CLUB

(Mary's Pretty Maidens)

"Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With Silver Bells, Cockle Shells,
And Pretty Maidens all in a row."

How is your garden? Do you have some pretties to share? Would you like to exchange some of your extra beauties for someone elses treasures? I would.

Here's some extras from my garden:

Violets
Money/Dollar plants
Oriental Iris
Ferns
Myrtle

I'd like to have some Lavendar, but would be pleased to negotiate just about any other plant exchange.

Call me if you'd like to walk my garden and talk about our Pretties. Gloria 684-4011

DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

A directory of the lesbian/gay groups in the Michiana area has been compiled by the NOW Lesbian committee and information from the directory is available by calling an Open Arms staff member.

3RD SATURDAY OUT

Patties

In Granger on State Rd 23
Saturday July 16, 7:00 p.m.
Reservations due by Wed., July 13th
Call LU or Sheree for reservations: (616)-684-6365

ATTENTION: Third Friday Out is moving to Saturday. We will be known as Third Saturday Out for the summer months.

GAME NIGHT & POTLUCK

Saturday, July 23rd at Kaye and Marcia's
Swimming at 4 p.m., eat at 6 p.m.
Bring a dish to pass and own drinks
Call Kaye or Marcia at (219) 271-0338 for directions

Anyone interested in hosting future game night/potlucks, contact Lu and Sheree at (616)-684-6365

SOFTBALL SCHEDULE: WHISTLESTOP CAFE

Date	Time	Park
Jul 1	6:30	Boland
Jul 8	6:30	Potaw.
Jul 15	7:30	Potaw.
Jul 22	6:30	Potaw.
Jul 29	7:30	Potaw.

COME JOIN THE FUN

Canoe with us July 9th from Leeper Park to St. Patrick's Park. Picnic to follow. Cost is $16 per canoe or $8.00 per person. Reservations due by **July 1st.** Bring a dish to pass and own drink, hot dogs, buns and condiments provided. Call Kaye or Marcia at 271-0338

PLEASE TYPE SUBMISSIONS IF POSSIBLE

If it is possible for you to type your submissions on a letter quality typewriter or printer, please do so using a 55 space line. This will make layout much easier. Thanks.

MISSION STATEMENT

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community.

NEWS NOTES

---Thousands of lesbians and gays went to Dismay World on Saturday, June 2nd, to kick off the Lesbian/Gay Pride Month. Although Disney doesn't sponsor the event, it can't disallow it, says Disney spokesperson Jane Adams. Disney representatives met with lesbian and gay organizers to discuss behavior guidelines. Holding hands was OK because "that's acceptable for anyone in the park," Adams said. But anyone exhibiting "passionate activity" was asked to leave. --from USA TODAY--

---Minneapolis can't offer health insurance to lesbian and gay employees because state law does not recognize same-sex partners as dependents or spouses, Hennepin County District Judge Deborah Hedlund ruled Friday, June 4th. The city adopted the policy last August. --info from USA TODAY--

---The Girl Scouts say they don't discriminate against lesbians , contrary to what Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders was quoted in USA WEEKEND. "We don't discriminate. We also don't actively recruit homosexuals." the 3.5 million-member group has no rules on individual sexual preferences but doesn't allow outward sexual behavior, heterosexual or homosexual. --USA TODAY--

---The California Supreme Court agreed to decide whether the Boy Scouts can bar homosexuals and atheists. At issue: whether the group is a quasi-public business, or private and not covered by state civil rights law. The issue is controversial in California. the San Francisco United Way stopped supporting Boy Scouts two years ago--one of only four of 14,000 branches that do not support local Boy Scouts. --USA TODAY--

---Amanda Bearse, the lesbian actor who plays the heterosexual neighbor on "Married...With Children", will host "Out There II", Comedy Central's second all lesbian/gay comedy special. Taping is set for June 23 in New York. The hour long special will debut on the cable network Oct. 11, National Coming Out Day. --info from Detroit Free Press--

---Sweden's parliament on June 7th approved a law allowing lesbians and gays to marry but stopped short of granting them the same rights as heterosexual couples. Under the law, couples of the same sex will be able to wed in a ceremony similar to a civil marriage, but same-sex partners will not be allowed to adopt children or to have children by artificial insemination. -- info from Detroit Free Press--

---Anti-homosexual rights initiatives passed in 4 of 5 communities in Oregon. They would prevent local governments from granting minority status to lesbians/gays. Similar measures have passed in 20 other counties but a 1993 state law blocks enforcement of them. --info from USA TODAY--

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---Seven male Stanford athletes were arrested in May by campus police and accused of spray painting the school's "Gay Liberation" sculpture and bashing it with a bench. The district attorney has not decided whether to file charges. Police responded to a report of male students ramming a wooden bench into the sculpture which depicts two lesbians and two gays. The sculpture had been spattered with black paint. Damage is estimated at $5000. --info from USA TODAY--

---Lesbians and gays held the first service in May at Israel's Holocaust Memorial to honor the tens of thousands to homosexuals murdered by the Nazis. The Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem refused to officially sanction the event, however, and police detained four religious protesters who shouted "AIDS", "No More Gays" and Homos! May God Save You!" A bout 150 lesbians and gays form 12 countries, mostly Jews form North America and Europe, hugged each other for comfort in the flame-lit Hall of Remembrance, where the names of Nazi death camps are etched into the stone floor. Some sobbed; others shouted the Jewish prayer of mourning to drown out the dozen or so protesters who disrupted the service four times. --info from Detroit Free Press--

Woman's Way is sponsoring the Women In Prison Project as a community service project. WIPP will offer imprisoned women the opportunity to write about the special challenges they face. Women's Way offers women the opportunity to read and write about the truth of their lives. If you would like a sample copy of Woman's Way, send $3 to PO Box 19614, Boulder, CO 80308-2614. For more information about submissions, advertising or the Women in Prison Project, contact Lynn at 303-530-7617.

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The Global Fund for Women is a grant making organization which gives funds to seed, strengthen, and link women's groups working for the enpowerment of women. Its work is rooted in the belief that women's strength and ingenuity can make a world of difference. The Global Fund is committed to giving flexible, timely support to groups working on emerging, controversial or difficult issues, and it is the only US foundation that exclusively funds international women's rights. To date, The Global Fund has given away $3,302,832 in 612 grants to 484 groups in 97 countries. For more information about The Global Fund for Women, contact Mairi Dupar, Communications Fellow, 415-854-0420 or write The Global Fund for Women, 2480 Sand Hill Rd, Ste 100, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

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BLOCK OUT Pat Robertson's "Family" channel. "Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition is one of the most powerful political forces in the United States. His empire is primarily funded by his cable television station "The Family Channel." Call your cable company and tell them that you want to block out "The Family Channel." For more info write Grassroot QUEERS, PO Box 1294, Philadelphia, PA 19105. Tel: 215-545-7453

Health Research: The Lesbian Health Project wants accounts of lesbian and bi women's lives and experiences with health and health care relating to parenting, donor insemination, child custody, and other topics. Send to Suzann Gage, LHP, 8235 Santa Monica Blvd., #308, West Hollywood, CA 90046.

The Southside Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is located at 1329 E. Jackson Rd in South Bend. The Reverend Jacquelyn L. Foster is the pastor. Kaye Kale on behalf of Open Arms conducted an interview with the Rev Foster.

Question: Last year, Southside became an "open and affirming" congregation. Was this position adopted by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as a denomination or is it unique to Southside?

Answer: The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada has studied and discussed sexuality and homosexuality in particular over the past 20 years. In 1977, our General Assembly passed a resolution supporting the civil rights of lesbian and gay persons. Following a study by our Task Force on Human Sexuality, the General Assembly has refused to condemn persons on the basis of their sexual orientation, leaving such matters as ordination up to the ordaining regions.

What this means in practical terms is that regions and congregations of our denomination vary greatly in their beliefs and understandings regarding sexual orientation. Some are very affirming, some remain condemning, and many are in the study process.

In the midst of this ongoing process, congregations such as Southside have chosen to do serious study and to take steps to declare ourselves "open and affirming ministries." There are at this point about 26 open and affirming ministries. Southside is the only open and affirming congregation in the Indiana region.

Question: What does open and affirming mean?

Answer: First, "open and affirming" indicates that we have undertaken an intentional and in-depth congregation-wide study of sexuality. This included biblical, theological, psychological, sociological study as well as study of our own tradition. We heard each other's stories. We cried and laughed and prayed. In the end, we declared by unanimous vote that we "affirm the dignity, importance, worth, and personal gifts of all people. We welcome into community and membership, with all its privileges and responsibilities, all persons regardless of age, gender, education, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, culture, ethnic origin, or physical condition. We seek to overcome all barriers used by people attempting to separate God's children from one another and from God."

It basically means that we are an open people on a faith journey together with Jesus Christ. We are not all in the same place. We are truly a diverse congregation. The difference is that people tend to feel safe and loved here.

Question: What effect did it have on Southside--did people leave?

Answer: The process has been going on for a number of years. We didn't just wake up one day and start talking about sexuality. However, when the formal congregational study and discussion began in 1992, there were 3 people who left the congregation immediately, saying that they would not even talk about "that." We grieved their decision, but our process had come out of much prayer and study by the elders and there we no question of the faithfulness of the discussion. Sometimes people aren't ready to grow and we can't control that.

The effect on the congregation has been tremendous. This congregation has always been a deeply prayerful, faithful, joyful people. And that spiritual depth has grown through this process.

There has also been numerical growth, though we were not necessarily expecting it. We were taking a faith stance and were prepared to lose those who needed to be in a non-inclusive congregation. What happened was that we lost 3 and we have (to this point) gained about 25 who newly participate. The new folks include lesbian and gay as well as heterosexual families with children. The homophobic community's assumption is that only lesbian and gay people would be seeking an open and affirming church. That could not be farther from the truth. Many people have been separated from the church because of the church's narrowness.

Question: Do you think the decision was positive or did it have a negative effect?

Answer: I can only see a positive effect. Story after story, conversation after conversation, reaffirm that. That doesn't mean that we don't hurt with the 2 or 3 folks who've had a hard time with it, but sometimes growth is painful.

Question: A statement was made by a newcomer. "Wow, it's a real church!" Do you think there may be a misunderstanding?

Answer: People who have been alienated from the church have understandably explored a variety of spiritualities. Their assumption has been that they would never again be welcomed and feel at home in traditional mainline Christianity. Some have, indeed, found a spiritual home in some other tradition. However many are Christian to the core of their being and know God's graceful love in Jesus Christ. I think that person's response, "It's a real church!" grew out of their expectation that an open and affirming community would be something other than a Christian church practicing communion, baptism, and the traditions of our faith. Or perhaps they got here and found that it wasn't a gay and lesbian community, but a diverse community of God's people worshipping and serving together. People who come to Southside don't want to be a lesbian/gay church or a straight church. They want to be a church.

Question: If you could tell the Open Arms readers one thing, what would it be?

Answer: That's hard. I guess it would be that we at Southside know the pain and alienation that has come of the church's prejudice and injustice. We're in a difficult time in our society as some branches of the church wage a war of hatred against women and gay and lesbian people. But those voices, as loud and popular as they may be, do not define the Christian faith. We do not have to leave Christianity in order to affirm the fullness of life and of love. We are called to embrace God's love manifest in the person of Jesus. We are called to accept God's graceful movement in our lives, even when some tell us that God's grace is only for them. Risk exploring your faith. You're welcome at the table!

Reinforce Your Goals Through Mental Imagery

The power of our minds is a marvelous wonder. Have you ever heard the phrase "How you think, is how you feel"? Ask yourself, would you rather be around enthusiastic people or pessimistic people? The research is out there all over the place that is telling us that people who think positively, laugh and use humor, have some type of belief in a higher power, and have some goal and purpose for living, experience better health and more expedient recoveries from illness then people who have the opposite traits.

Here is a visualization using mental imagery. Try it and see if you can't pull up a resource state for yourself that is positive around the following exercise.

1: Begin with a relaxation exercise such as deep breathing, meditation, taking a passive position in a comfortable place that is quiet and just allowing your thoughts to flow in and out without really focusing on them. Put on some soft music or do a body scan to relax any tenseness in the body.
2: Select the goal or goals you want to work on.
3: In your mind's eye, see yourself with the goal already met.
4: Experience the feelings you would have with your goal already met. What would people say to you? What would you be doing? What would you look like? What would the scene look like: describe your surroundings? What smells, colors, tastes, etc. would you be experiencing, if any. Add as many details as possible.
5: See other people who are important to you responding to your achievement.
6: Look back over any steps it took to reach your goal from beginning to it being achieved. What was the first step? Decide to take some action on the first step. Feel a sense of accomplishment for achieving each step. Add details about the action steps and your feelings.
7: Be happy and thankful for having reached your goal.
8: Gradually drift back to the present time.
9: Now open your eyes and take action on that first step.

Cathy Lambert, ACSW, CCSW

Can You Answer This?

1. What popular daytime soap opera featured a Lesbian character in 1983-84?

2. How many times was Billie Jean King ranked #1 female tennis player in the world?

Answers:
1. All My Children
2. Four

LESBIAN/BISEXUAL WOMYN'S SEXUAL BEHAVIOR SURVEY: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Distributed at the National Women's Music Festival in 1993.

Authors: Kathleen M. Morrow, M.A., Patricia M. Meinhold, Ph.D., R.W. Fuqua, Ph.D, Western Michigan University

(Portions of this information were presented at the Society of Behavioral Medicine convention, April, 1994, and the American Psychological association's convention on Psychosocial and Behavioral Factors in Women's Health: Creating an Agenda for the 21st Century, May, 1994.)

If you would like additional information, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with your questions to: Kate Morrow, Department of Psychology, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Or call: (616)-387-4492, e-mail: Internet: X92MORROW@WMICH.EDU

Background Information

Womyn now comprise approximately half of all new Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) cases in the United States. Female-to-female transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) has received little attention to date, despite several report of transmission of the virus between female sexual partners since 1984. There is little documentation of the frequency of risky sexual behaviors, or even rates of HIV seropositivity in womyn who engage in sexual activity with womyn. Likewise, we know little about patterns of personal risk perception and attitudes toward safer sex practices among lesbian and bisexual womyn.

These are some of the preliminary results of the survey distributed last year. In total, 504 lesbian and bisexual womyn from across the country completed the survey which had been distributed through outreach workers and at both the National Women's Music Festival in June, 1993, and the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in August, 1993. Womyn self-reported their personal health histories relevant to HIV/AIDS risk (e.g., STD's, cervical dysplasia) and their frequency of engaging in sexual behavior that exposes them to body fluids which can transmit HIV. In addition, womyn responded to a series of questions about their perceptions of their personal risk for HIV infection and their attitudes toward available safer sex strategies (e.g., use of a variety of barrier methods).

The bottom line is this: Womyn who have sex with womyn can transmit HIV to each other through sexual activity. Please be safe!

Characteristics of Womyn Who Completed the Survey

Sexual Orientation: Lesbian 86.5% Bisexual 13.5%

Average Age of Respondents: 34.7 yrs. Age Range: (19-84 yrs)

Education History: High School Diploma or less 17.5%

Some college/technical school thru graduate school 82.5%

Racial/Ethnic Background:

Bi/Multi-Racial: 5.8% Latina/Hispanic: 2.2%

African-American: 1.2% Native American: 1%

Jewish: 4% Euro-American/White: 85.5%

What does this mean? It means that most of the womyn who completed the survey were white and had a high degree of formal education. These results, then, are not necessarily speaking to the issues of womyn of color, or womyn with less formal educations, although their answers are included, so please take heed.

Relationship Status

Respondents: Not Active Sexually 12.7%

Monogamous: 66.9%

Nonmonogamous: 20.4%

What does this mean? Our biggest concern here is with the womyn who are engaging in sex with multiple partners, the 20.4% that labelled themselves as nonmonogamous. If they are not sure of their partners' HIV status, they could be at risk for HIV infection, or STD's. In addition, a portion of the womyn who labelled themselves as monogamous have been in their current relationship for less than 6 months. It is possible here, too, that womyn are not certain of their partner's HIV status, since it takes your body at least 3 months (sometimes longer) to produce antibodies that show up on the HIV test. We need to be safe until we're tested and are reasonably sure of the results, and each other's commitment to safer sex (including monogamy).

Behaviors of Particular Concern Reported by Women Who Completed the Survey...

--90% engage in active oral-vaginal sex

--88% engage in active digital-vaginal sex

--19% engage in active oral-anal sex

--35% engage in active digital-anal sex

--20% engage in sexual activity involving possible exposure to blood

--2% engage in anonymous/sex club sex with men/women

--4% engage in group sex/sex parties with other women

--3% engage in group sex/sex parties with men

2 or More Sexual Partners in the Last Year by Gender:

Female Partners: 27.6% Male Partners: 6.2%

1 or More Episode of Unprotected Sex per Month by Gender:

Female Partners: 83.13% Male Partners: 7.54%

What does this mean? The facts are the facts, and risk is risk. Remember the basics: there are four fluids which serve as vehicles for HIV to travel from one body to another. They are blood, semen, vaginal secretions (especially when menstrual fluids are present), and breast milk. If you engage in any behaviors where fluids contact fluids or mucous membranes, and HIV is present, you are at risk. Having multiple partners increases your chances of exposure because it increases the fluids - potentially HIV infected fluids - you are exposed to. Having unprotected sex does the same. And, although it may sound sexist, there are more men who are HIV-infected than womyn in this country. Thus, if you sleep with men, you're increasing your relative risk of exposure.

To Be Continued Next Month

THE DOCTOR IS OUT.....
by Dr. Sandra Beaty

Women Who Discovered Their Lesbianism After Age Forty–the Late Bloomers.

This study was started for personal reasons; we all feel better when we know that we are not the only ones experiencing something. So I decided to see who else out there was going through changes that were similar to the ones I was experiencing.

I solicited volunteers through Lavender Morning and through word-of-mouth, and ended up with a small sample of seven women..to whom I am grateful for their time, patience, and honesty. These women each filled out a forty item questionnaire and participated in a one-hour interview. The interview addressed five specific issues: peer socialization as a teenager, homophobia-both cultural and internalized, discovery of one's own lesbianism, delayed adolescence, and coming out.

The seven women respondents ranged in age from 44 to 61 years at the time of the interview, with an average age of 50. They were better educated than the general population: one had a high school education, three had some college, and three had advanced degrees. Five of the women had their first sexual experience with a woman when they were between the ages of 43 and 49, with an average age of first same-sex encounter of 45. Two of the women had not had a sexual encounter with another woman, although they both viewed their sexuality as homosexual. Only one of the women had any male lovers since discovering her lesbianism. Five of the women were divorced, two had never married. Four of the five had been married only once, with marriages lasting from 13 to 22 years. Six of the women had children.

All of the respondents considered themselves homosexual at the time of the interview. Two of the women had not experienced sex with another woman, four had two lovers and one had five lovers in the past. Four of the women were currently involved in relations that had lasted from four months to six years, with an average length of two years. Three of the women had remained friends with female ex-lovers, while four of them had remaind friends with male ex-lovers.

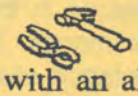
Five of the women are "out" with family and friends, and reported that their parents and siblings are generally accepting and supportive of their lesbianism. Two are "out" with some of their family and friends. Only one is "out" in business deallings. Two women reported fearing persecution in the workplace, four reported fearing loss of business or loss of job. All of the women are pro-choice. Four of the women are members of both a women's organization and a gay organization, five consider themselves both gay and women's rights activists. Five of the women believe that their attraction to women is innate while all seven also believe that loving women is also a choice they have made.

Although four of the women did not actively seek out their first femnale lover, six of the seven women reported being happier as a lesbian than they were were before they knew. Four of the five sexually active women reported thay they were not the first female lover of their first female lovers. Three of the women consider themselves religious, and another one considers herself spiritual. --Lavender Morning--

Female Crew Being Sought by Habitat

Habitat for Humanity of St. Joseph County is looking for a few good women.

Actually, for lots of women good with hammers, skill saws, plastering trowels, pipe wrenches and wire cutters.



The goal is to build a Habitat House with an all-female crew of volunteers and with materials and cash donated by businesses owned by women.

"We're just getting started," said JoAnn Wolfe, the house captain for the project. "We've got a few names, although we need more."

The house will be one of several to go up during the week of Aug 6 through 12 in Monroe Park on the city's near southeast side, Wolfe said.

Anyone interested in volunteering or donating should call Habitat's headquarters at 288-6967.--info South Bend Tribune--

LESBIAN LAND GRANTS

The Lesbian Natural Resources (LNR) is an organization dedicated to the development of rural lesbian communities. They fund grants for land purchase and development, community development programs and individual self-sufficiency projects. Their intention is to support the growth of lesbian communities which are actively creating lesbian culture, preserving land-based life skills and rural ecosystems, and discovering non-oppressive ways to live and work together.

It is important that the work of LNR become known throughout as many lesbian communities as possible. In addition to monetary grants, LNR's advocacy committee will, upon request, assist dykes with issues such as land purchase, establishing a land trust and obtaining tax exempt status. LNR can also offer assistance to lesbians in the development of rural land skills. For more information and/or a grant application, write LNR, PO Box 8742, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Silent No More

by Mary E. Banghart

I am a forty year old, female, Caucasian of Irish and French Canadian decent. In those characteristics, I have no choice. I am also a practicing Christian in a committed relationship, and I grant you, those are two chosen lifestyles.

The good news is that if I am treated unfairly in Grand Rapids for any of those characteristics — chosen or not, I have a voice before the Community Relations Committee. Under the current wording of the Civil Right Ordinance, I have protection from discrimination because of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, or handicap — nine identified categories. We forget sometimes that each one of those innate characteristics or chosen lifestyles was hard fought to be added to the list to clarify what equality means.

Tonight, many citizens of Grand Rapid — not just gays, lesbians and bisexuals — are asking you to add "gender orientation" to that list. As a voting, tax-paying citizen, who happens to be a lesbian, I am simply asking to be given a voice if I am treated unjustly because of one small part of who I am.

Opponents to this addition say that if I am given a voice, it will herald in the destruction of civilization as we know it. At least, that's how they've made it sound.

They try to silence me by saying I want special rights. Why is it an equal right for me to address the Community Relations Committee if I experience prejudice because of my chosen lifestyle as a Christian, but it suddenly becomes a special right if I seek a voice as a lesbian?

They try to silence me by saying I am not a member of a legitimate minority because I make too much money, or I have too much political power, or I've chosen this lifestyle. Are they talking about my homosexuality or my Christianity? Many Christians make a lot money, donate millions of dollars to political campaigns and have a chosen lifestyle — should they have no voice?

They try to silence me by saying I have a hidden agenda. If I have a hidden agenda, then all people protected by the nine existing categories in the ordinance must have the same agenda.

They try to silence me by saying I'm Un-American and I want to pervert the children of this country. I am a child of this country and a decorated veteran of the United States Army. The only perversion I see is people stirring up fear and perpetuating ignorance about who I am.

I'm not the first person people have tried to silence by thumping their Bibles and waving the flag. Under the guise of serving God and country, misguided people have tried to silence... Native Americans, Jewish Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Woman Americans, and the list goes on and on. Well, thank God and country bigotry did not triumph and their voices can still be heard in our land.

Today, they're trying to silence me as a Lesbian American, and they have a multitude of excuses as to why. Well, there is no excuse for discrimination, no matter how they package it.

This is only little Grand Rapids, Michigan. But this is my home, too, and I deserve equal protection under the laws and ordinances of this city from people like the ones who have tried to silence me today.

When will it all stop? my opponents ask. It will stop when every citizen has a voice, and when fear and ignorance are silenced. On May 10th, please vote yes to help silence discrimination in Grand Rapids. Thank you.

(Well, I guess I outed myself as a Christian. I can't help it, I was born again that way. Many people may not agree with that lifestyle choice, but we must agree to defend each other's right to make those choices or we fight in vain — MB) ▼

The Grand Rapids city council voted, 4-3, to add "gender orientation" to the city's civil rights code.

MYTHS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS DEBUNKED

Fear of homosexuals in the military, in Scouting, in housing, employment and health care is based on myth. For example:

**Homosexual Scout leaders would sexually abuse kids. Facts say not so. a study by the American Humane Association, a national anti-cruelty agency, found that 11 out of 12 pedophiliac arrests are heterosexual.

**Homosexuals in the military are discipline problems and undermine morale. Again, the facts say not so. A $1.3 million Pentagon study concluded that homosexuals pose no health, behavior or morale problems that good leadership can't handle.

**Gay soldiers increase the risk of AIDS. Wrong again. The military has strict HIV testing policies in place and bars new recruits with HIV. Besides, gays are already in the military and HIV rates have been steady at about 500 a year.

**Lesbians and gays want special treatment. In fact, they want the right not to be assaulted walking down the street. Not to be discriminated against when they seek a job--even in the military. Not to be turned away when seeking a place to live. Without fears, prejudices soon crumble. --info from USA TODAY--

LUCY STONE

Stone, pioneering activist and editor of the influential suffragist newspaper the *Woman's Journal* carried her egalitarian convictions into her personal life. She composed a then unheard-of document she called a marriage contract with her future husband, Henry Blackwell, in which the pair defined themselves as equals. She then had the audacity to refer to herself a "Mrs. Stone" after marriage. Those women who followed her example were blithely referred to as "Lucy Stoners".

--form the Book of Women--

FOR WOMEN ONLY

The residents of Susan B. Anthony Memorial Unrest Home (SBAMUH) announce the arrival of FOR WOMEN ONLY BOOKS into our southeastern Ohio community. To our knowledge, For Women Only is now the only bookstore located on a womyn's land in North America. We strive to select feminist, lesbian, women's health care and children's titles that are not racist, sexist, fatophobic, violent, ableist, ageist, or lesbophobic. For more info about the SBAMUH womyn's land community, or current book catalog write For Women Only Books, Box PR, 13479 Howard Road, Millfield, OH 45761.-info off our backs-

ROOMMATE WANTED:

Female looking for female to share home. Use of house, washer and dryer. $60 per week. Call Terri at 289-7605.

Domestic Partners: Vermont is the first state to offer health benefits to domestic partners of state workers. The pact with the employees' union provides unmarried heterosexuals and homosexual partners benefits now offered to spouses. Employees must swear they've had "an exclusive and enduring relationship" for at least six months. "This was a matter that should have been negotiated with the union and now it has," said Gov Howard Dean.

LESBIAN AND GAY AA GROUPS

Sundays: Elkhart General Hospital, Renaissance Unit, 2nd Floor, 7 p.m.

Mondays: First Unitarian Church, 101 E. Northshore, South Bend, 7 p.m.

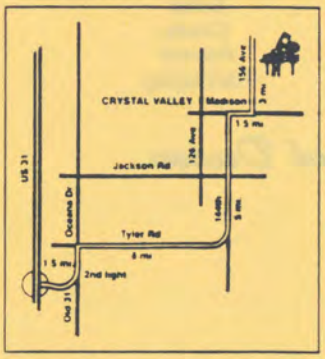
(1st meeting of the month is an open meeting)

Saturdays: First Unitarian Church, 101 E. Northshore, South Bend, 8 p.m.

MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

	Advance by 7/16	At Gate	Earliest Admittance
6 Day: Mon/Tues-Sun	$200-230	$225	Mon 2-11pm Tues 7 am
5 Day: Wed-Sun	$175-205	$200	Tues 12 Midnight
4 Day: Thu-Sun	$150-180	$175	Wed 12 Midnight
3 Day: Fri-Sun	$125-155	$150	Thu 12 Midnight
2 Day: Sat-Sun	$ 75 -105	$100	Fri 12 Midnight
1 Day: Sunday	$ 35 - 55	$ 50	Sat 12 Midnight

Money orders, Visa, MasterCard, bank or traveler checks accepted. No personal checks.



Name

Address

City/State/Province Zip Country

Telephone Number

FESTIVAL TICKETS:

___# 6 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
___# 5 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
___# 4 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
___# 3 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
___# 2 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
___# 1 Day Tix at $_____ each, total of $_____
Total Amount of Ticket Purchase $_____

Acct # ____________________

MC ☐ Visa ☐ Exp. Date ______

PRINT NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD

CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE

Send self-addressed stamped envelope and Cashier's Check, Money Order or Credit Card info to WWTMC Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458. Ticket purchases received after July 23rd will be held at the Box Office. No Personal Checks. NO REFUNDS AFTER JULY 7TH.

Office Use: Date Rec'd: _____ Date Sent: _____ Tx #: _____ CS#_____

EDITORIAL POLICY

We may edit any article submitted for length or content. We ask that all articles submitted be signed and typed, but will respect the wishes of the author by not printing her name if so requested.

INDIVIDUALS • COUPLES • FAMILIES • GROUPS

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ACTRESSES WHO DARED

Lesbians are not usually part of the Hollywood scene. But, even so, a few brave women did play Lesbian and Bisexual parts. If you haven't seen these movies, look for them in your video store. Greta Garbo - Queen Christina; Audrey Hepburn & Shirley MacLaine - The Children's Hour; Melina Mercouri - Once is Not Enough; Mariette Hartley & Lynn Redgrave - My Two Lovers (made for TV movie); Sandy Dennis & Anne Heywood - The Fox; Linda Hunt - Waiting for the Moon; Beryl Reid & Susannah York - The Killing of Sister George; Elizabeth Taylor & Susannah York - X, Y, and Zee; June Allyson - The Group; The Adventurers; Cher - Silkwood; Whoopi Goldberg - The Color Purple.

OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the August *Open Arms* is July 10th. Submissions can be mailed to Open Arms, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or given to Mary, Sheree or Kaye. Submissions received after July 10th may not be published in the August newsletter.

Newsletter meeting: Sunday, July 10th, 1994 at Kaye and Marcia's, 6:30 p.m. Call 271-0338 for directions.

EVENTS COORDINATORS

3rd Friday Out: Lu & Sheree (616) 684-6365
Wimin's Video Night: Gloria & Julie (616) 684-4011
Game Night: Sheree (616) 684-6365
Sunday Brunch: Kaye & Marcia (219) 271-0338

Women of Pride Honored During NOW Celebration of Stonewall Rebellion

The Women of Pride Awards Reception on Saturday, June 25, in New York is NOW's premier event during the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion - the spark that ignited the modern lesbian and gay civil rights movement.

A pre-reception at 2 pm will feature NOW President Patricia Ireland and Wanda and Brenda Henson of Camp Sister Spirit. The awards reception, honoring the Hensons, will follow at 3pm. Singer k.d. lang has also been invited as an honoree. Both events will take place at the Manhattan Club, on the corner of 7th Avenue and 52nd Street.

During the month of June, hundreds of thousands of people from around the world will converge on New York City to commemorate Stonewall 25.

For further information, call Janet Black, lesbian rights program director at 202-331-0066.--info National NOW Times--

OPEN ARMS STAFF

Mary	(219) 234-5986
Sheree	(616) 684-6365
Kaye & Marcia	(219) 271-0338
Advertising:	Kaye or Marcia
Subscriptions:	Kaye or Marcia

DRIFT-WOODS COTTAGES

Two-bedroom and one-bedroom cottages available on Lake Michigan, ten minutes south of Saugatuck, Michigan. The cottages are open year around, are fully furnished, have well-equipped kitchens, and linens and towels are provided for bedroom and bath. The living rooms have gas log fireplaces. Gas grills are provided for outdoor barbeques. The beach is accessible via stairs. Hiking trails, sand dunes, cross-country skiing, shops galleries, restaurants, antique shopping nearby.

Call Susan for weekend, mid-week, weekly visits at (616) 857-2586.

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Attorney-at-Law

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Powers-of-Attorney
Relationship Contracts

(219) 234-5986

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Bus: 1-800-333-1732
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Loan Officer

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Mishawaka, Indiana 46545

New! Opening in June a new women's guesthouse!
Call about special pre-opening rates in May.
Book now for Holland Michigan Tulip Festival, May 4th-14th.

Saugatuck on the river...

DEERPATH LODGE

... an enchanting retreat

Deerpath Lodge sits atop a dune overlooking the Kalamazoo River. Surrounding evergreens, oaks, and an extensive wildflower garden provide a rustic charm. The river and 45 acres seclude our private retreat from public access. Saugatuck, the infamous art colony, and mecca of innovative shops and restaurants is just five minutes by car, longer by boat. We offer three spacious guest rooms, each with private bath; one with kitchenette. A wholesome breakfast is provided.

Guest Rooms For Women

For Reservations & Information:
P O Box 849 Saugatuck, Michigan 49453
1-616-857-DEER

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JULY

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
AA Elkhart 7 p.m. every Sunday				Reservations due for July 9th canoe trip	1 Softball 6:30 p.m. Boland	2
3	4	5 Support Group 7 p.m.	6 NOW Mtg St. Joe Libr 7:00 p.m.	7	8 Softball 6:30 p.m. Potawtami	9 Canoeing Leper to St. Pats
10 Open Arms Mtg. 6:30 p.m.	11	12	13 Reservations due for 3rd Friday Out	14	15 Softball 7:30 p.m. Potawatami	16 3rd Sat Out 7 p.m.
17	18	19 Support Group 7 p.m.	20	21	22 Softball 6:30 p.m. Potawatami	23 Game Night & Potluck (swim 4 p.m.) 6p.m.
24 PFLAG 31	25	26	29	28	29 Softball 7:30 p.m. Potawatami	30

ALL Times are Indiana time.

Subscription for Open Arms -- $10.00/year

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

Make check payable to Open Arms and mail it to: Open Arms, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546.

BIKE TRIP

Tour Leelanau county by bicycle with lesbians and gays from the Midwest. Camp near Sleeping Bear National Park. This weekend is sponsored by Friend North, the lesbian and gay group of Traverse City. Included in the cost is the camping, planned tours, food for a party on Saturday evening and a T-shirt. The cost is a $50 donation to Friends North. To register, send a check payable to Friends North, P.O. Box 562, Traverse City, MI 49685-0562. Questions answered by Gretchen Sauvage, (616)-929-3824, or Jeff Knebl, (616)-271-3042.

OTHER COMING EVENTS

JULY 9 - A RETRO-FLASHBACK NITE at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse. A flashback into your coming-out. Dress in your coming-out threads and bring 45s, records, tapes, CDs (label them) of the music of the time. Prepare to reminisce.

JULY 16 - ALIX DOBKIN, 8:30 and 9:45 p.m. Mountain Moving Coffeehouse.

JULY 22-24 - NORTHAMPTON LESBIAN FESTIVAL. (413) 586-8251 for info.

AUG 9-14- MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL (See Registration Form elsewhere in O.A.

SEPT 9-11-SISTERSPACE POCONO WEEKEND. (215) 476-2424 for info.

OCT. 7-9- SECOND NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMEDY CONFERENCE with Karen Williams, Sara Cytron and others. Columbus, OH. (216) 289-2939 for info.

Same Time Every Month

1st Wednesday - NOW Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Main Library, Corner of Main and Wayne, South Bend. Call 288-7123 for info.

4th Sunday - P-FLAG Meeting 2-4 p.m., Christ the King Lutheran Church, 17195 Cleveland Rd., South Bend. Call Nancy at 277-2684 for more info.